

Torch of Reason

The Only Paper of Its Kind.

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ARE YOU FULLY CONVERTED?

The Religion of Humanity has its devils to fight. As Science is its savior, so is Ignorance and the evils it brings, or permits to come upon us, its devils. Now, in order to become converted to this up-to-date, scientific and true religion, all those who are "outside of the fold" have to do is to be baptized by a perfect and unconquerable desire to know the truth—to know as much of the truth about everything as they are capable of, and the desire to help others to its saving light. This last idea of helping others is very essential. The powers of the human mind are three fold. We know, we feel and we will; and in order to be fully converted to this great and wonderful Religion of Humanity, all these powers must be fully changed from the old selfish self-service to the service of the race. In order to know all we can know we must have a desire to know, and the desire, if perfect, will convert us from an ignorant state of fear to a knowledge and a confidence that no creed, nor church, nor priest can possibly give. But to knowledge and fearless confidence must be added the lively interest in, and intellectual love for our fellow men, as an incentive to gain knowledge; or for what purpose would those who have been converted from the selfish state "dig deep while sluggards sleep?" In fact, in this complete Religion of Humanity, instead of there being only the emotional part of man affected the whole being is enlisted in the highest service of which we

are capable—the service of each for all and all for each. The intellect, the emotions and the will must all be converted from their self-destroying egotism to a self-preserving, or, perhaps better, a self-including altruism.

As soon as a few members of the human family are fully converted to this inconceivably, far-reaching Religion of Humanity, they will be able to convert the whole world in a very short time. They will have the power necessary to do more in twenty years toward bringing us the true salvation, than Jesus and his disciples have done in twenty centuries.

Perhaps some who read these lines are too obtuse, although it is not their fault, to understand what it means to bring true salvation to the world. But he who can think, let him think of the devils from whose hoofs, and horns and poisonous breath we need to be saved. Not mentioning murderous war, the stultifying greed for wealth, the prison of poverty and ignorance of countless millions, nor the destructive, immoral habits of the masses, let us briefly examine just one devil, whose power may be overcome when a few have evolved sufficiently to drop their childish thoughts and "let the Savior in."

The devil of which we speak is one that may perhaps be called the "devil himself," or the chief devil for which all others are but imps. His name is DEATH. The Christians may sing, "Safe in the arms of Jesus," but they prefer to stay out of his arms as long as possible, and judging from their looks, when death stares them in the face, they would rather see most anyone else coming—an Infidel lecturer not excepted. And Free-thinkers, even those who have best learned to take things philosophically, and who know that there is no suffering "beyond," are not over anxious, in a normal condition, to run up against this "eternal sleep" which we sometimes eulogize.

What would you give, dear reader, to find the fountain of eternal youth? "Let us be honest." We may make up our minds that death is certain, that it must be so, and brace ourselves by the thought that we will meet it as becomes a Christian or as a philosopher, and then dismiss it from the mind as much as possible; but for the coming generation and possibly during our lives, even the black death-devil may be conquered. There are two ways in which this wonderful feat may be accomplished. The first way is, we believe, an unnatural way, and will take a long time, besides it does not really conquer Death, it only limits his power.

This is the plan: Educate out, of the minds of all, the fear of death. It can be done. It has been done.

The horrible fear that the majority of men and women have is a matter of centuries of superstitious education. Readers of history know that the Spartans feared dishonor more than death. Spartan boys were taught to steal and thought it perfectly right, but would rather die than be caught at it. So we see that education has everything to do with it, and as long as we suppose, and most everyone does at present, that Death is certain, the only way to defeat him is by the evolutionary, educational process of disabusing the minds of men entirely of the fear, and thus rob this Samson-devil of the source of his power.

But after all, this first way falls very short of robbing death of some of his worst "stings." It is said that when a man just begins to learn how to live he has to die. This is true, and the world loses all that one might do, by his being obliged to "shuffle off" just at a time in life when he is prepared to do the most good. Who can possibly estimate the loss that the world sustains when old age and death overtakes such men as Paine, Jefferson, Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, Spencer and Ingersoll.

What a fortune did the dying queen offer for only one more short hour of life!

"It is not necessary for men to die!" is being whispered about among some of the men who have been considered the most learned and soundest scientific thinkers of this generation. And some think it possible that even our lives may be prolonged HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

If this is accomplished, will belief in Jesus have brought it about? Ah, no. Science is the savior that has saved many individual lives and is now placing its bow of hope in the sky of human thought to be read by all whose eyes are not blinded by the fluttering flag of the old Salvation Army. A few have crept away from the din and confusion of the drums of orthodoxy and begin to catch the "angelic" music of science. It comes clear as a silver bell and sings of peace and love and long lives of happiness and joy.

In the temples of Science are now many worshippers who love and labor (the best worship) to interpret the "holy" language to the glory of man. Some of these interpreters are becoming fully converted to the Religion of Humanity. They are learning that our help must come from ourselves and not from gods nor sons of gods. Within the last few days a French brother has made a wonderful discovery which is thought by many to practically put Old Age and Death within our control, and while we do not say that this attempt will prove successful, yet we do say that there is a cause for death and that we can see no reason why this cause cannot be indefinitely postponed.

If this can be accomplished the fear of pain caused by accident will yet remain and prevent us from becoming too careless. But the emancipated need not fear for the final result. The true spirit of science has entered the world and "will not down". It matters not that many temples erected in its name are dominated by the worshippers of strange gods, our cause will triumph and our savior will finally "save to the uttermost".

There is only one way, however, for this greatest of salvations to come upon us. Only a very few have as yet known the true state of things and only a few individuals here and there have become thoroughly imbued with the humanitarian idea, who have also had the scientific spirit and intellect to carry out their desire. Our religion must be taught and it must be scientifically taught! We must be careful. We must take pains. We must look into the minutiae as carefully as a trained detective does into all the details of an important case. Listen to this, from the pen of Doyle: "Here, for example, [speaking of a book] is one 'Upon the Distinction Between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccos'. In it I enumerate a hundred and forty forms of cigar, cigarette and pipe tobaccos, with colored plates illustrating the difference in the ash. It is a point which is continually turning up in criminal trials, and which is sometimes of supreme importance as a clew."

It is one of the important duties of our modern religion to detect the errors of the past and present and if we are successful it will be because we learn to work in a scientific manner.

Our success, and the prosperity and happiness of all the coming generations are at stake. Let us make haste slowly, but let us make haste. And let us remember that intellect and knowledge are not alone sufficient. We must be thoroughly converted or our knowledge will be wasted on self and our energies exerted for vain purposes. Are you fully converted to the Religion of Science and Humanity?

AT PEACE.

When the Liberal University was founded over three years ago we had no buildings of our own, no money, no library and nothing but a very few enthusiastic workers and friends. In our weak, financial condition we were neither feared, loved nor respected but by a very few, and many of the few began to forsake us as soon as we did contrary to some of their various and contending ideas. But we labored on, and now we seem to be at peace with the whole world, excepting in our opposition to what we consider the evils of our time. And see what we have accomplished in three